

Good evening everyone,

My name is Carla Rivera Perez and I am a 4th year Medical Student at UConn School of Medicine. Originally born and raised in Puerto Rico, I was first exposed to the outstanding learning institution that is UConn Health through their Health Career Opportunities Program's (HCOP) summer programs that I applied to and was accepted. I completed 3 of their summer programs during my undergraduate career. It was because of these wonderful summers spent learning at UConn Health that I decided to apply to their medical school. After being accepted into their medical school and achieving a lifelong dream, I was offered a full tuition scholarship to UConn that would cover my education throughout the next four years in this institution. This was truly a blessing and am eternally grateful to UConn Health and the HCOP office for such an extraordinary and one-of-a-kind opportunity. Throughout last four years of my life spent at UConn School of Medicine I have grown so much, both professionally and personally. I am grateful for the learning environment it provided me and the outstanding teachers and mentors that have guided me along the way. I will carry with me all the fond memories of my times spent in the Rotunda learning alongside my classmates and future colleagues and cherish the time I spent participating in the Medical/Dental Student Government (MDSG) as Class Representative for the past four years. While completing my residency, I will also remember the faces of the farm workers I met while volunteering at UConn Health's Migrant Farm Worker's mobile clinics. This experience will continue to serve as motivation to provide psychiatric care to the underserved and uninsured members of my community wherever I go. All of these experiences have shaped me into who I am today and because of them, I am confident that I will carry the UConn name proudly during the next stage of my professional career, completing a Psychiatry residency program. It is thanks to the General Assembly's past support that I am able to be here today to speak to you all. It is also my sincere hope that UConn Health continues to count on your support so that future underrepresented minority students, such as myself, can continue to have the opportunity and privilege I had in learning at the renowned learning institution that is UConn School of Medicine.

Thank you,

Carla Rivera